

Message Text

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ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 NSF-01 ERDA-05 NASA-01

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USINJC, IN, US

SUBJ: INDO-US JOINT SUBCOMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

REF: A) STATE 224948; B) NEW DELHI 12250

1. WE APPRECIATE BEING KEPT INFORMED OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS
AND CONCUR THAT SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION REMAINS A HIGHLY POL-
ITICALLY SENSITIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVELY DIFFICULT AREA.

2. IN PRINCIPLE WE LIKE THE IDEA OF PICKING OUT SEVERAL
SPECIFIC COOPERATIVE AREAS FOR HIGHLIGHTING IN A JOINT COM-
MISSION SETTING. ERTS APPLICATION IS AN EXCELLENT PROJECT
ON ITS MERITS. SINCE IT RAISES OBVIOUS POLITICAL SPECTERS
(SPIES IN THE SKY) WE WILL HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL HOW IT IS
HANDLED. (YOU MENTION OF ORISSA HEIGHTENS OUR CONCERN).
A MINISTERIAL LEVEL BLESSING IN THE JING COMMUNIQUE (NOT
JUST THE MINUTES) WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT START FOR ERTS. IN
THE LATER IMPLEMENTATION STAGE WE SHALL HAVE TO MAKE SURE
THAT POLITICAL LEVELS OF THE GOI ARE AWARE OF THE PROJECT AND
ARE PREPARED TO DEFEND IT.

3. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENT
WHEREBY THE GOI IS KEPT ABREAST OF USG RESEARCH IN THE
ENERGY FIELD BUT NOTE THAT IN THIS (AND ERTS) THERE IS
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NO QUID PRO QUO. WE WOULD SUGGEST REVIEWING THE INDIAN

LIST AND ADDING 2-3 ITEMS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO US WHICH WOULD ALSO BE HIGHLIGHTED. OUR REVIEW WOULD SUGGEST THAT IN ADDITION TO ERTS AND SELECTED ENERGY PROJECTS WE SHOULD HIGHLIGHT AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST SUCH AS AGRICULTURE - (1) NEMATODE PESTS CONTROL, (2) EPIDEMIOLOGY AND CONTROL OF PLANT DISEASES, AND (3) INCREASING PHOTOSYNTHETIC EFFICIENCY OF PLANTS; ENVIRONMENT - (1) WATER AND AIR QUALITY, (2) SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL; HEALTH - (1) CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND STROKE, (2) HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AND (3) LEPROSY.

4. AS REGARDS PEST CONTROL, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THIS IS AN EXCELLENT PROJECT IF IT CAN BE PROTECTED FROM POLITICAL EXPLOITATION. WE DO NOT THINK THAT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH STATEMENT (WHICH WE HAVE NEVER SEEN - NEW DELHI'S 12250) PROTECTS US FROM ANY OTHER CASES, EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE IN CLOSING THE BOOKS ON THE MOSQUITO PROJECT. MEA HAS TOLD US THAT WHILE IT WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION ULTIMATELY TO PROCEEDING WITH THE PEST CONTROL PROJECT, IT PREFERENCES NOT TO PLACE IT AS AN EARLY ITEM OF JOINT COMMISSION BUSINESS. WE SUGGEST YOU TELL ANANDAKRISHNAN THAT WE STILL ARE INTERESTED IN THE POST CONTROL PROJECT AND ARE PREPARED TO GO AHEAD ON IT WHEN WE CAN BE SURE IT HAS RECEIVED POLITICAL LEVEL CLEARANCE IN THE GOI. WE CAN LIVE WITH WATERED DOWN LANGUAGE IN THE MINUTES BUT THIS ONLY STRENGTHENS THE NEED FOR CAREFUL SCREENING (AND POLITICAL LEVEL APPROVAL IN SOME CASES) ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS.

5. THE GOI HAS RECENTLY ESTABLISHED AN INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THREE MINISTERS, HEALTH, DEFENSE, AND PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS. THIS COMMITTEE HAS APPOINTED A SUB-COMMITTEE OF SECRETARIES, TO REVIEW ALL JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ADHERENCE TO INDIAN PRIORITIES AND TO FORMULATE GUIDELINES IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ALL PROJECTS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES. WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT DEVELOPS FROM THIS REVIEW TO SEE IF IT GIVES US THE POLITICAL INSURANCE WE NEED.

6. WITH RESPECT TO SPECIFICS, WE REALIZE THE PROJECT SUB-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MISSIONS WERE TOO DETAILED BECAUSE DOST LITERALLY THREW TOGETHER ANYTHING THAT CAME IN FROM THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES WITHOUT MUCH REVIEW. THIS IS TYPICAL BECAUSE OF THE VERY SMALL STAFF INVOLVED (ONLY ONE OFFICER, DESHPANDE) FOR ALL INDIAN S&T BILATERALS. THERE STILL IS CONFUSION AS TO THE EXACT OPERATION OF THE JOINT SUBCOMMISSION ON S&T. SAXBE

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